CD/PV.646
18 March 1993

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 18 March 1993, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Gerald Shannon (Canada)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 646th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament, and I wish now to make my opening statement as President.

I am pleased and honoured to assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and, on behalf of our colleagues, I wish to thank the outgoing President, Dr. Radoslav Deyanov of Bulgaria, for his excellent direction following his assumption of this role on 15 February 1993. As President I also wish to welcome today the presence of, and the statement by a United Nations women's delegation, the conference on "Women in the peace process", on the occasion of the United Nations International Women's Day, which was observed on 8 March. While the Conference on Disarmament was not in session on that day, the United Nations as a whole marked the occasion, most notably by the passage in the human rights Commission of a resolution on integrating the rights of women with the human rights system.

Since the Conference on Disarmament opened on 19 January, we have made worthwhile progress on furthering our work, including an important early agreement to focus on four items of our agenda dealing with a nuclear test ban, transparency in armaments, negative security assurances, and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Conference on Disarmament has also responded to the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" with a number of recommendations, most notably, in Canada's view, the emphasis placed on reinforcing regional approaches to security concerns and the commitment to intensify consultations on improved and effective functioning of the Conference.

The Conference on Disarmament also produced a report on the "Ongoing review of the agenda, composition and methods of work of the Conference". Ambassador Paul O'Sullivan of Australia and Ambassador Miguel Marín Bosch of Mexico were appointed special coordinators to review respectively the question of membership and the agenda. Their work will soon be concluded and I strongly support their meaningful contribution in working towards a successful resolution of these issues.

The resumed session of the First Committee in New York ended on 12 March and adopted by consensus a resolution on reform of the arms control and disarmament machinery. The resolution underscored the distinctive roles of each of the three multilateral arms control and disarmament bodies; secondly, it provided additional impetus to the ongoing work of rationalization of the three bodies; thirdly, it provided an opportunity for focused consideration of practical ways to enhance the effective interaction of these three bodies; and fourthly, it supported the strengthening of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. We note that the resolution calls on the Conference on Disarmament to reach early agreement on the question of its membership; and it stresses the importance of further enhancing the dialogue and cooperation among the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament.

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The results of the resumed session of the First Committee represent a modest, but nevertheless important first step in reforming the arms control and disarmament mechanisms within the United Nations. But a great deal remains to be done: in the Canadian view the overall process continues to reflect procedures and attitudes more in keeping with the past than with present-day realities. We need to accelerate the task of rationalization; of setting concrete and practical priorities; and generating more genuine dialogue. Now that East/West polarization is over, there is the possibility for greater functional cooperation on specific issues among delegations from differing groups and perspectives.

My delegation has suggested that one approach to enhance the arms control and disarmament process would be to develop a greater degree of coordination between the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament, so that the United Nations Disarmament Commission deliberations could become more relevant and results-oriented. The Chairman of the First Committee, Ambassador Elaraby of Egypt, has suggested that the United Nations Disarmament Commission be an "antechamber" for the Conference on Disarmament. It has also been suggested that the United Nations Disarmament Commission could forward suggestions directly to the Conference on Disarmament without first having to pass them through the First Committee. We think we need to show greater flexibility in our work. The United Nations Disarmament Commission prepares the groundwork for the Conference on Disarmament through the development of principles as well as providing, at least potentially, a degree of focus for the Conference on Disarmament agenda. Closer cooperation and some mechanism for linkage or dialogue is, in our view, required in the short term, if these two bodies are to remain relevant in the rapidly changing arms control and disarmament environment.

I wish now to address some substantive issues wearing, if I may, my Canadian hat. The non-proliferation Treaty is the linchpin of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. It serves as an effective barrier to the horizontal spread of nuclear weapons and at the same time sets a framework for nuclear and general disarmament. In addition, it reinforces the verification role of IAEA safeguards and contributes to peaceful international nuclear cooperation and commerce. The non-proliferation Treaty is thus a vital instrument for international peace, security and economic well-being in the modern world.

Collectively we are much closer to the goal of universal accession to the non-proliferation Treaty; some 156 countries are now parties to the Treaty, but about 33 are still outside this keystone arrangement. Collectively we will have to redouble our efforts on this front. The process of extending the non-proliferation Treaty began formally with the passage of an enabling resolution at the forty-seventh General Assembly last fall. The first Preparatory Committee will meet in May in New York. We want to ensure a smooth and effective process on behalf of indefinite extension of the non-proliferation Treaty, and make the right administrative and procedural decisions in aid of that goal. But the non-proliferation Treaty is not an end

in itself; it is a means to achieve, through non-proliferation, general and complete disarmament. This means that we must not only think in terms of indefinitely extending the non-proliferation Treaty, but also we must collectively defend the non-proliferation Treaty against those who seek to vitiate it and avoid its disciplines. In the present context I refer, of course, specifically to the action taken two weeks ago by the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea. Canada has expressed its grave concern over the decision of North Korea to withdraw from the non-proliferation Treaty. On behalf of the Government of Canada, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, has urged that country to reconsider its retrograde decision. I am sure that sentiment is shared by the majority of States.

We have seen remarkable progress with respect to existing nuclear weapons. This progress directly responds to the ideals set out in article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty. Canada applauds the great progress that has been achieved in the reduction of nuclear weapons over the last few years. Well-deserved credit should accrue to the American and Russian negotiators who achieved Start I and II and the INF, among other salutary arrangements. The world is a safer, more secure place as a result of their efforts. But these achievements were made in a bilateral context. The time is ripe to widen the focus of our collective attention onto nuclear weapons more generally than the United States of America/Russia context. The other nuclear-weapons States should begin to consider how they too could participate in the reduction of their nuclear arsenals.

Again, wearing my Canadian hat, I would like to turn to the Conference on Disarmament agenda. The primary role of the Conference on Disarmament is of course to negotiate global arms control and disarmament instruments. The Conference on Disarmament can also usefully conduct pre-negotiation discussions, as it currently does on a nuclear test ban, and on outer space. But the actual negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a comprehensive test-ban treaty to eliminate all nuclear testing in all environments for all time remains a priority Canadian objective.

The current situation gives grounds for optimism about the prospects for the negotiation of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Of the declared nuclear Powers, the French moratorium has been extended. The legislated American moratorium does not run out until July of this year, and our understanding is the United States Congress has mandated the pursuit of an agreement on banning testing for several years into the future. For its part, Russia has extended its moratorium until July 1993.

Momentum, once slowed, is very difficult to re-establish. Canada urges these nuclear-weapons States and those who have not yet declared a moratorium to seize the present opportunity and make meaningful progress towards a verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Conference on Disarmament membership clearly is an issue which has been discussed extensively here and in New York at the resumed First Committee and I wish Ambassador O'Sullivan well in his efforts to reach

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consensus. Conference on Disarmament procedures and membership are closely linked, but they are subsidiary to its substantive negotiating agenda. These issues should not be permitted to overshadow our substantive agenda. Canada has recognized for some time that the current Conference on Disarmament membership no longer reflects the changing international security environment. We in Canada think exclusivity is no longer acceptable. Collectively as Conference on Disarmament members, we are now in the process of defining criteria for changing the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. However, many problems regarding membership need first to be answered: how can limited membership being advocated by some be justified in 1993? Why should countries be excluded because they are situated in a certain geographic region? And who is to judge that countries be excluded because they are not directly involved in the problems emerging from the new international security environment?

The United Nations funds the operations of the Conference on Disarmament and all United Nations members have assessed costs. In our view it is unthinkable in this new age of international cooperation and democratization that United Nations Member States can be called upon to fund a multilateral organization but be excluded from its membership. Canada believes strongly that any interested State which applies for membership in the Conference on Disarmament should be welcomed as full members.

The third substantial issue I wish to address is transparency in armaments and the arms Register. With the passing of the cold war has come a move away from a singular preoccupation with the threat posed by nuclear weapons and increased attention on the need to control the unrestrained transfer of conventional arms, particularly to regions of chronic instability and conflict. In the wake of the Gulf war, the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms was an important step forward in removing the veil on the international trade arms trade. By enhancing transparency, the Register offers the hope of building confidence and reducing perceptions of military vulnerabilities which can serve in turn to stem dangerous levels of regional arms accumulations.

For our part, Canada will submit its report to the Register in full and by the 30 April 1993 deadline and we strongly urge others to do the same. In addition to the required information on imports and exports the Canadian report will also contain a breakdown on our military holdings of the seven major weapons systems enumerated in the Register. This reflects not only our commitment to the Register but also our view that it is essential that it be expanded at an early date to include military holdings and procurement through national production.

It is important to remember that the Register is not an end in itself, nor is the transparency which it is meant to promote. It is only useful if it serves to alter the behaviour of States and contributes to a reduction of the arms trade. Canada supports the suggestions made by the Netherlands, the United States and others that members of the Conference on Disarmament take a lead role in supporting the Register by submitting their reports in full and on time and in urging other Member States to do the same. We hope that the

(The President)

Conference on Disarmament can energize movement on the issue of transparency in armaments and that the current session will provide productive debate on this issue.

To conclude, in his "New dimensions" report, the Secretary-General of the United Nations noted that three key themes - integration, globalization, and revitalization - are the foundation of an intensified international effort to enhance the effectiveness of arms control and disarmament. The Secretary-General's thesis is based on the assumption that the world community has moved away from atavistic notions of international security based on cold war rhetoric. It has become apparent that the cold war distinction between East and West, North and South has been overtaken by changes in the international security environment. We need to explore ideas on new approaches to the arms control and disarmament machinery, with a view to making that machinery more forward-looking, efficient and results-oriented. Renewed and constructive cooperation can be a useful component in pursuing non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, by facilitating development of consensus positions as well as isolating any recalcitrants.

As we collectively noted in our response to the Secretary-General's "New dimensions" report, there is the need to liberate the term "arms control and disarmament" from its cold war preoccupation with numbers of weapons. As important as this is, arms control and disarmament is now seen to both embrace and constitute a part of a far broader process of confidence-building, of transparency, of accountability, of verification and, most importantly, of promoting less reliance on weapons and more reliance on genuinely cooperative mechanisms for creating and enhancing international peace and security.

Colleagues, I look forward to serving as your President and will do all I can to make this a most productive period of this year's Conference.

That concludes my opening statement. Before we proceed with our regular business for today, I now give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, who will read out the message addressed to us by the conference on "Women in the peace process" which was held last week in Geneva, some of whose members are in the gallery.

Mr. BERASATEGUI (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations):

More than 70 women from 22 countries gathered on 8 March 1993 at the Palais des Nations to mark International Women's Day. They adopted the following message:

"We once again wish to convey to you our concerns about the slow progress in achieving disarmament, and at the same time express our support for all your efforts to advance the disarmament goals.

(Mr. Berasategui, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations)

"The theme of our meeting this year is 'Women in the peace process'. We are looking particularly at violence in its many manifestations of which women are all too often the victim but against which women also have a remarkable history of resistance.

"Armed conflict and war are unacceptable acts of violence. Their elimination and prevention are at the heart of our deliberations. We consider that disarmament, and nuclear disarmament in particular, is crucial to overcoming violence. Women can make a major contribution to the peace and disarmament process. In fact, we consider the participation of women as essential.

"We appreciate the fact that since March 1992 a number of significant steps in arms reduction and disarmament have been taken. Thanks to your efforts, the chemical weapons Convention was adopted and is now open for signature and ratification by Governments. We will do our part to see that our Governments will become parties to the convention.

"We welcome also the recent agreement between the Governments of the United States of America and the Russian Federation to significantly reduce their nuclear-weapons arsenals. We hope that this process will be continued and result soon in further reductions. We hope also, that these negotiations will be joined by the other nuclear-weapons States.

"We are conscious that the destruction of nuclear weapons bears heavily on the environment. We urge the Conference on Disarmament to do everything possible to reach agreements that prevent the further production of weapons and their delivery systems. Our Earth and its peoples can no longer carry the burden of the production and then destruction of weaponry.

"We wish to underline four specific issues that are of particular concern to us at this time:

"1. We welcome the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, and urge you to begin negotiations in order to reach a speedy

conclusion on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. France, the Russian Federation and the United States are observing moratoria on nuclear weapons testing at this time. We congratulate them and urge them to decide on extending them further. We call on China and the United Kingdom to also declare moratoria of their own. This is the time for the Conference on Disarmament to move ahead with the negotiations for a treaty to prohibit all nuclear-weapons testing for all times.

"2. We emphasize again the urgency of achieving nuclear disarmament. We call on you to begin negotiations for a convention on prohibiting the production of all nuclear weapons and on destroying existing stockpiles.

(Mr. Berasategui, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations)

"3. Contrary to our expectations that improved international relations, especially between East and West, would lead to a significant decrease in arms transfer and sales, the volume continues, and even increases in certain cases. We welcome the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments. We ask that the question of curbing arms transfers and sales be included in the mandate of the Committee.

"4. We fully agree with your statement contained in document CD/1183, paragraph 11, that disarmament is a collective responsibility. We see this responsibility as being not only one of Governments, but also one of every country's citizens. We therefore repeat our request of a few years ago, that you consider ways of improving access of non-governmental organizations to the Conference on Disarmament, including women's movements working for disarmament.

"We consider these to be urgent problems needing to be resolved. The changed international climate should make progress toward genuine disarmament possible.

"In conclusion, we wish to assure you of our continued support for all steps you take on the way to general and complete disarmament."

This ends the message of the conference on women in the peace process.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for reading out the message of the gathering on "Women in the peace process" to the Conference, and I thank the gathering on "Women in the peace process" for their strong and supportive statement.

Several members have expressed the wish to make statements in connection with the message received by the Conference, and as agreed at the presidential

consultation yesterday, I shall proceed now to give them the floor, before we begin with the list of speakers for today. I now give the floor to the coordinator of the Group of 21, Ambassador Goonetilleke.

Mr. GOONETILLEKE (Sri Lanka): Mr. President, may I, at the outset, congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference? I wish to express our appreciation of the excellent manner in which your predecessor Mr. Deyanov of Bulgaria conducted the affairs of this Conference.

I wish to make a brief statement on behalf of the Group of 21 to welcome the presence amidst us today of the representatives of the 1993 Women's Gathering for International Women's Day. We are happy to note that the International Women's Day was celebrated on 8 March all over the world. It is encouraging that more than 70 women from 22 different countries were able to participate in the meeting held at the Palais des Nations to mark the occasion.

(Mr. Goonetilleke, Sri Lanka)

The members of the Group of 21 take this opportunity to express their appreciation to the Women's Gathering for International Women's Day for their valuable contribution towards universal peace and disarmament. The Women's Gathering, which consistently attaches the utmost priority to universal peace and disarmament, stands out as an effective international on-governmental women's organization, in the promotion of greater universal awareness and interest in the subject of world peace and disarmament. Through its activities, the Women's Gathering remains a source of inspiration and strength to all those who are dedicated to the noble cause of peace and disarmament, including this important forum.

This year the Women's Gathering have chosen "Women in the peace process" as the theme for their meeting. Being conscious of the tragic consequences of war and armed conflicts on women and the increasing level of violence against them in conflict situations, the Group of 21 recognizes that it is timely and appropriate that the Women's Gathering has highlighted this issue as a priority area in its deliberations.

We wish to underline the fact that the interest in and commitment towards disarmament and particularly nuclear disarmament, manifested by the Women's Gathering for International Women's Day transcends national boundaries and has become a symbolic expression of mankind's aspiration for global peace and disarmament. While warmly welcoming the message of International Women's Day, the Group of 21 look forward to their moral and active encouragement in the work of the CD.

On behalf of the Group of 21, I wish to extend our best wishes to the Women's Gathering for their continued efforts in the activities related to universal peace and disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the coordinator of the Group of 21 for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me and to my predecessor. I now give the floor to the coordinator of the Western Group, Ambassador Wagenmakers.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): Mr. President, I would like to use this occasion to extend the warmest congratulations of my delegation on your assumption of the important office of President of the Conference on Disarmament. I wish you every success and I want to very much assure you of the full support of my delegation. I would also like to use this opportunity to extend the appreciation and gratitude of my delegation to your predecessor, our Bulgarian colleague, Minister Counsellor Deyanov of Bulgaria.

On behalf of the Western Group, I should like to respond briefly to the message addressed to the Conference on Disarmament on 8 March 1993 to mark International Women's Day, as read out a moment ago by the Secretary-General of the Conference. Due to the meeting of the resumed session of the First Committee in New York, from 8 to 12 March, Western Group delegations were this time unable to follow closely the international women's meeting in

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

Geneva. Nevertheless, the Western Group would like to use this opportunity to thank publicly the participants in the womens gathering for their important message, of which it has taken note with interest.

Rather than commenting in detail on the points raised in the women's message to the CD, I should like to express my support for the general observation that "women can make a major contribution to the peace and disarmament process". Indeed, such a role by women all over the world is to be encouraged.

The Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community, has an even greater role to play in the post-cold-war era. Most, if not all, of the concerns raised in the women's message are currently under intensive consideration in the Conference, which has started its work in 1993 expeditiously and with vigour. It is the hope of my Group that the women's NGOs as well as other non-governmental organizations, will continue to remain active proponents of effective disarmament measures that will strengthen peace and security, and, in short, will help to make the world a safer place to live in.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Wagenmakers as coordinator of the Western Group for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me and to my predecessor. I now give the floor to the coordinator of the Group of East European and Other States, Ambassador Batsanov of the Russian Federation.

Mr. BATSANOV (Russian Federation) (translated from Russian): First of all, Mr. President, allow me also on behalf of my delegation to express my satisfaction at your taking up the post of President of the Conference on

Disarmament, as well as my conviction that you will successfully guide our work. I should also like to express appreciation to your predecessors in the Chair for their major contributions to our work.

I shall not conceal that it is agreeable to me to express gratitude on behalf of our group to the Women's Gathering for their very important message to the Conference on Disarmament. Allow me also to take this opportunity, although a little late, to congratulate all women present in this room on the International Women's Day, 8 March. Our group believes that the active participation of women in the solution of the task of strengthening peace and international security, the development of the disarmament process, the creation of reliable barriers to the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the reduction of the military threat as a whole is one of the most important factors for ensuring the progress of the world community in this direction. The women of the world - and this is very valuable - bring to the extremely complex technical sphere of disarmament their intrinsic sensibility and the sincere desire to achieve real results for the purpose of creating a safer world. We are very appreciative of a striking element in the women's message to the Conference on Disarmament - the deep interest of the women's movement in the achievement of new agreements which will make a further contribution to disarmament and the continuous reduction of military potentials. Allow me in conclusion to express the hope that the message we have just heard will serve as an additional stimulus for stepping up the efforts of the Conference on

(Mr. Batsanov, Russian Federation)

Disarmament in tackling the tasks before us and strengthening the links between the Conference and the prestigious social movements in favour of disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Batsanov as coordinator of the Group of East European and Other States for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me and to my predecessors. I now give the floor to the representative of China, Mr. Hu.

Mr. HU (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, first of all the Chinese delegation wishes to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the CD. We would also like to express our thanks to your predecessor, the distinguished representative of Bulgaria, for his valuable contributions.

Today, soon after the 8 March International Women's Day was observed, a number of representatives from international women's organizations are present here to observe our proceedings. The Chinese delegation wishes to welcome them.

Arms control and disarmament are major issues which have a bearing on peace, security and development for people all over the world. Today, when the world situation has undergone enormous changes, international disarmament efforts have achieved some success, though at the same time there are still serious and numerous challenges ahead. It goes without saying that future work in the field of disarmament will be even more important and arduous. Therefore, it will need

all the more the common efforts of the international community, including those of women throughout the world.

Many international and national NGOs, including women's organizations, have made many contributions in this regard. The Chinese delegation appreciates these efforts and contributions and would also like to take this opportunity to extend our festive greetings to women colleagues in all delegations, ladies observing our proceedings and women staff members of the secretariat.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of China for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to Ambassador Norberg of Sweden.

Mr. NORBERG (Sweden): Mr. President, first let me congratulate you upon the assumption of the office as President of this Conference. As usual, you can count on the full cooperation of my delegation. I have asked for the floor in order to add my voice to previous speakers in connection with the commemoration of International Women's Day. As is well known, many women, not least from my own country, have made significant contributions to the disarmament process. Names like Alva Myrdal, Inga Thorsson and Maj Britt Theorin are well known in this context and I am confident that the contribution by women in this disarmament process will be of the same importance also in the future.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Sweden for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair and to previous Chairs.

We shall now proceed with our regular business for today. I have on my list of speakers the representatives of Argentina, Zimbabwe, the Russian Federation, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, France and Japan. I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina, Ambassador Lanús.

Mr. LANUS (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): It is with genuine satisfaction that I am taking the floor in this plenary today under the presidency of Canada. Not only because it is you, Ambassador Shannon, who are carrying out this great responsibility, but also because your presence on the podium of this historic room enables us to pay a well-deserved tribute to your country, Canada, which found a way to distinguish itself during the difficult years of the cold war in disarmament and security forums by a more ambitious and less restricted vision of what could be done in this delicate field of international life.

Today I would like to address an item that is of special importance for the Argentine Republic: transparency in armaments and in particular the process which has as one of its principal instruments the Register of transfers of

conventional weapons. Argentina has been stressing the need to adapt and update the agenda of this and other bodies with competence in disarmament matters. Today's topic will allow me to expand on some of the ideas which have led my Government to take this position.

Last year we welcomed the addition to the annual programme of work of the CD of item 9, dealing with this very topic of transparency in armaments. As we all know, 1992 found us all embarked on the demanding task of concluding the convention on chemical weapons, which undoubtedly prevented us from giving this item all the attention it deserves. The informal deliberations we carried out under the skilful guidance of Ambassador Mounir Zahran of Egypt were useful in making us aware of the magnitude and the diversity of approaches to this item that exist in the Conference. This was inevitable if we recall that resolution 46/36 L from which this whole process stems in the final analysis is a text which from the doctrinal viewpoint defines a number of facets on which we will have to work. These include aspects ranging from the definition of what constitutes an "excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms" to practical measures to increase openness and transparency related to transfers of high technology with military applications without overlooking weapons of mass destruction.

The task ahead, as can be seen, is not easy. However, we cannot delay the commencement of practical action any longer. We welcome the prompt establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the item. The informal structure which we had last year was perhaps an indispensable but not sufficient step to comply with the request which the General Assembly addressed to us and which the CD, as an autonomous body, endorsed. The task must start by setting up a clear programme of work, derived from the mandate that has been conferred on the Committee. The two main avenues proposed are respectively the one on

(Mr. Lanús, Argentina)

"interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production", on the one hand, and on the other, the subject of "transfers of high technology with military applications and weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with existing legal instruments". On both of these subjects we will have to elaborate practical measures to increase openness and transparency. In the view of the Argentine delegation, we must approach this mandate in a practical frame of mind, seeking to define in terms of concrete measures the main headings proposed in resolution 46/36 L. As a technical and negotiating body it falls to the CD to flesh out these ideas.

We will now propose some possible alternatives. First, excessive and destabilizing accumulation; weapons of mass destruction. The topic undoubtedly falls within the very origin of this subject and the register of arms transfers. Naturally, any attempt to define what would be "excessive" or "destabilizing" in the military field is a complex task. However, I would venture to say that this makes us run the risk of becoming ensnared in an endless rhetorical tangle.

Obviously these notions subsume concepts that are central to State policy, such as the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence, or that of due account being taken of regional circumstances, which are constantly changing. It is because of this that we feel that the treatment of the chapter on the accumulation of arms should not lead us to a debate which is limited to the theoretical plane. At the same time, we must remember that in just a few more months the second group of government experts responsible for the analysis of the operation of the Register of arms will have to consider its expansion, precisely through the inclusion of military holdings and procurement through national production. This group will undoubtedly have to look at matters of a terminological nature and try to provide practical answers, as was done by the panel that was so successfully led by the Ambassador of the Netherlands, Hendrik Wagenmakers. For the moment it is our view that the work of the Conference in this phase of our work cannot produce immediate results, in so far as it depends to a large extent on developments elsewhere, such as in the 1994 group and the conclusions on the operation of the Register in the present start-up phase.

Second, weapons of mass destruction and transfers of high technology with military applications. These are the subjects covered in paragraph 13 of resolution 46/36 L. Here, we believe, the ground is more promising for concrete work. Let us first address the question of what might be done in practice with weapons of mass destruction. Fortunately, the nuclear arms race has ended, at least in quantitative terms, and the almost self-sustained tendency to grow that arsenals displayed until recently has been reversed, as is proved by the Treaty for the elimination of intermediate-range missiles (INF), START I and II. We agree with those who consider that these treaties in themselves supply information on the level of existing stockpiles. This is inevitable since very precise thresholds for the different weapons systems are set by means of their provisions. Nevertheless, we think that an interesting practical contribution might be included here: the establishment of supplementary registers for the comparison of the information obtained from the implementation of the various treaties.

(Mr. Lanús, Argentina)

As is well known, because of their complexity and the costs involved in their implementation, these agreements often set targets for compliance which are staggered in time. To mention just one, the START II Treaty sets the year 2003 for its full implementation. The chemical weapons convention which we negotiated here stipulates a 10-year period for the destruction of existing stockpiles. Nevertheless, the implementation of these agreements of such importance for all can be delayed or be affected by circumstances as yet unforeseen. In this regard, a parallel register kept by the United Nations and, like the present register of conventional weapons, supplied with information by interested States, would be a practical instrument for transparency and openness. It would be a kind of logbook which would tell us exactly what stage we have reached and how far we have yet to go. Such a register would also have the advantage of being

voluntary and composed of information which is essentially publicly available. No-one would be required to provide more information than that contained in public commitments. It could be argued that if the information is publicly available there would be no need to create this parallel register. To this objection we would answer very simply: in the first place this argument could have been raised to discredit the Register of Conventional Arms, and yet we all regard it as a useful and necessary instrument. Secondly, it is one thing to say that information is publicly obtained and a very different thing to have access to it in a rapid and organized way. In this dilemma lies the difference between transparency as an abstract goal and the effective availability of the information. Fragmented, partial and outdated information, however public it may be, is not transparent. We believe that the Conference could easily set out certain guidelines for the compilation of this register on the status of existing arsenals of weapons of mass destruction.

Another concrete idea which the Conference might perhaps start looking at would be the elaboration of a code of conduct on conventional arms transfers. The item is complex and also linked to the efforts that have been made under resolution 46/36 H on illicit trade. Work in this area could start in the first place with an analysis of national policies with regard to transfers. As is well known, the Register of Conventional Arms will include existing information on relevant national legislation and procedures (para. 18 of resolution 46/36 L). Once we are in possession of a sufficient quantity of information - and it is clear that many countries are responding positively to this request from the General Assembly - a comparative analysis of the legislation could be carried out in order to determine possible common and convergent areas, with a view to the elaboration and later the adoption of universal criteria.

There is another specific point on which the Conference could make a positive contribution. The question of transfers of high technology with military applications is undoubtedly one of the indispensable components of the security agenda for the coming years. As we mentioned at the beginning of our reflections on excessive and destabilizing accumulations, I think we should also make an effort to avoid a repetition of highly familiar exchanges. No-one now challenges certain premises: that technology in itself is neutral, that there is in principle a right to have access to high technology which is necessary for development, and that this should be governed by well-defined

(Mr. Lanús, Argentina)

rules in order to avoid a situation where, under the justification of technological advances for civilian purposes, for example, proliferaters acquire the means to shorten the process leading to weapons of mass destruction. On all these ideas much has been said and written. Now is the time for the less attractive and tougher task of shaping the principles into practical means as all of us without exception indicated when we agreed the terms of resolution 46/36 L. The existing regimes applicable to different fields (nuclear, chemical, biological and missiles) are a first important link. Each country has adopted a specific position on these in accordance with its own perceptions. As far as

Argentina is concerned, in the post-cold-war world they are useful tools for the preservation of stability. However, we are convinced that we can aspire to more. In this connection the Conference could get down to the task of identifying possible areas for harmonization between what is already in place (the Australia Group, the MTCR, the chemical weapons Convention, the Nuclear Suppliers' Group) and national legislations, seeking to bear in mind the interests of as many States as possible in the area of access to technology and defining machinery which does not call into question the principle of preventing the proliferation of weapons with a mass destruction capability. For this exercise there is a need to coordinate the similar initiatives from various directions, for instance the consultations on non-proliferation being carried out by Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico, or the work in the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

We have attempted today to present some ideas so as to give specific content to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee which on item 9 of our agenda has been established without having yet been able to begin it substantive work. For the Argentine Republic, transparency in armaments is an essential prerequisite for the shaping of a stable and equitable international order. In this context, and under the auspices of the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations, the regional seminar on the register of transfers of conventional arms is being held in Buenos Aires. Technical experts, military officers and diplomats from many countries of the American continent, from north to south, have met in the capital of my country to facilitate the task of participating in the Register. In this sense, this is an exercise which is essentially technical. However, I should like to emphasize that while the arrangements for filling in forms for the Register are technical matters, the profound meaning of its existence is not. Hence we deem it essential for the necessary support to be lent to the Register from every region so that this time the effort is really representative and global in scope. The meeting in Buenos Aires aims at fulfilling that objective within the American context.

Transparency, as has been said, is not an end in itself. It is simply an instrument which helps to avoid misunderstandings and the accumulation of misjudgements as to the intentions of States. Recent history proves that ambiguity and confusion in military matters pave the way which sooner or later leads to suspicion, threats, risk and often war.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank Ambassador Lanús for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me and to my country. I now give the floor to the representative of Zimbabwe, Ambassador Jokonya.

Mr. JOKONYA (Zimbabwe): Mr. President, allow me, first of all, to express my profound gratitude and my delegation's sense of privilege at being accorded the opportunity to address today's plenary session of the Conference on Disarmament. At the same time, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate you upon your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on

Disarmament. Your known sterling qualities are a sure guarantee that under your stewardship, significant progress will be realised within this august body.

The waves buffeting the international political landscape today are pregnant with both opportunities and challenges. The demise of the cold war and the consequent collapse of the East-West divide in international politics has upset the logical presuppositions upon which the politics of that era were based. We have no choice but to adapt, albeit with a sense of purpose and direction, to the fledgling order. Failure to take cognisance of these epoch-making shifts would reduce our deliberations into meaningless parallel monologues. According to a famous Stoic dictum, Volentem fata ducunt, Nolentem trahunt - "he who is willing, the fates guide; he who resists, the fates drag along". Zimbabwe is willing to play its part in the current attempts to chart a new path in the search for stability on the world scene.

It is in this context that in my brief statement today I intend to focus specifically on the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. As you all know, Zimbabwe made a formal submission for membership to the Conference on 28 August 1986, a few months after establishing our presence here in Geneva. That was a vote of confidence in the work of the Conference and at the same time an explicit policy statement on our commitment to the pursuance of global security and peace.

The issues on the agenda of the Conference affect and permeate all aspects of inter-State relations. Regional political convulsions and ethnic conflicts that have become part of the post-cold-war scenario caution us against viewing the question of disarmament in isolation from socio-economic or socio-political realities. It has to be acknowledged that disarmament is a key element of our collective endeavours to strengthen international peace and security. Consequently, it is of paramount importance that all States be fully engaged in the process of disarmament. This is a necessary and inevitable development that, in the long term, will enhance the work and the relevance of the Conference, since disarmament and arms control relate to the security interests of all States - small and large alike.

We do not subscribe to the argument that an expansion of the membership will encumber the negotiating process. Negotiating efficiency should not be viewed solely in terms of the agreement reached on paper, but also in the context of the implementation stage. An agreement or convention negotiated by all the interested parties would stand a better chance of endorsement at the national, regional and international level. Globalization of the process of arms control and disarmament is the only way forward that would guarantee success in mankind's quest for a world free of weapons of mass destruction and other apocalyptic military threats.

(Mr. Jokonya, Zimbabwe)

The current CD membership of 38 does not reflect today's political realities as evidenced by the increasing number of countries expressing their interest in joining as full-fledged members. These aspirations should not be frustrated and the Conference has to respond to them expeditiously. The politics of exclusion based on narrow national interests might eventually dent the otherwise positive image of the CD.

Since Zimbabwe joined the family of nations in 1980, she has unflinchingly, at both the regional and international level, been continuously associated with international efforts to promote and strengthen global peace and security. Zimbabwe acceded to the non-proliferation Treaty early last year, and is contributing in a number of peacekeeping efforts under the aegis of the United Nations - in Angola, in Rwanda and in Somalia. It is in this spirit that Zimbabwe will host a third meeting of experts to examine the modalities and the elements for the preparation of a convention or treaty on the denuclearization of Africa from 5 to 8 April this year.

It is our hope that deliberations on the expansion of the membership of the Conference under the able guidance of His Excellency Ambassador O'Sullivan of Australia will lead to a balanced and satisfactory outcome.

In conclusion, I would like to commend the Conference on Disarmament for the successful conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention, and it is partly this historical success that today fuels us in our quest for membership.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Jokonya of Zimbabwe for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair, and I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation, Ambassador Batsanov.

Mr. BATSANOV (Russian Federation) (translated from Russian): A month and a half ago, in this room, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia G. Berdennikov dwelt in general terms on our country's approach to the issue of transparency in armaments. As he pointed out, we view transparency in armaments as an important confidence-building measure, a means to strengthen security and remove mutual concerns and misunderstandings, and in that regard we intend to participate actively in discussing the transparency problem here in the Conference on Disarmament. This is all the more important because the Conference, along with the United Nations General Assembly, is a major forum for discussing the issue of transparency. This is borne out first of all by the fact that the Conference has broad representation of the main suppliers and producers of arms as well as their recipients, and secondly, by the presence here of the required expertise. Against this background, we believe the discussion of the transparency issue in the Conference on Disarmament should become essentially a standing item.

Today, I would like to set out in greater detail our approach to the issues of transparency and to outline our view of their prospective consideration in the Conference. This issue has been under discussion in the United Nations and in other forums for a number of years. Although extensive work has been carried out

during this period - General Assembly resolutions have been adopted on the subject, an experts' report on the issue of

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transparency in arms supplies has been prepared, and finally the Register has been developed - we must not fail to recognize that in this area, we are just at the beginning of our work. Statements made during both the previous and the current sessions have already illustrated differences in the approaches to the issues of transparency in armaments by member States of the Conference, sometimes major ones. We are not inclined to dramatize this circumstance; these differences are in our view perfectly natural. After all, on the one hand this concerns a highly sensitive area directly related to countries' national security interests. On the other hand, the solution to the problem of transparency turns on a difficulty, so to speak, of a technical nature: differences in national legislation, difficulties which result from the fact that the statistical methods and estimates existing in various countries are not comparable or not sufficiently comparable. However, all these problems should not overshadow what is most important - our common readiness to discuss transparency issues, to look for points of convergence, as well as our common support of General Assembly resolution 46/36 L. Taking the above into account, we are in favour of a phased and sequential expansion of the area of transparency in armaments on an agreed basis which does not jeopardize the security of States.

I should say that for a whole host of reasons it is not easy for Russia to move forward on the path of transparency, bearing in mind the closed nature of our society in the past and the realities of the present day. I would like to note that some months ago Russia made public for the first time general data on exports of arms from the USSR for 1991 both in value and in volume terms - in other words it did what the Soviet Union had not done for over 60 years, since the time when it presented data on Soviet armed forces to the League of Nations for the last time. Now we are completing the preparation of data for the United Nations Register, which we consider at this stage as a basis for resolving transparency issues. We support the idea of expanding and improving the Register in the light of experience with its operation, and including in it additional mutually agreed categories of arms. I would also like to inform you of the positive attitude of the Russian delegation to the proposals on joint efforts in support of the Register put forward at the last plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament by Ambassador S. Ledogar.

One of the key items on the agenda of our Ad Hoc Committee on this topic is the issue of interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production. In our view, the prospects for achieving real results in this area may become clear in a year or two, inter alia once States submit relevant information on a voluntary basis. It would be desirable in this context to consider here at the Conference first and foremost such practical issues as fact-finding relating to the excessive accumulation of arms, illicit arms transfers and also the comparability of statistics and criteria of nationality of arms production and

storage facilities as a preliminary step before the mandatory extension of transparency measures to the area of military holdings and procurement through national production. There is also a need for a detailed and comprehensive discussion of issues related to transparency measures in the area of research and development, arms storage

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conditions and military budgets. Such an approach might provide a good basis for further development and improvement of the Register.

A few words on transparency issues with respect to transfers of high technology with military applications, and also on weapons of mass destruction. We agree with the distinguished representative of Japan, Mr. Tanaka, that consideration of this question is important, though it is a very complicated and delicate issue since it involves "strategic, technical and political questions and sometimes [touches] upon quite sensitive areas affecting national security and economic interests". It is precisely for this reason that we are in favour of thorough and comprehensive consideration of this subject, for which the required expertise must be brought in. The Conference on Disarmament might well also become a forum for considering national regulations and legislation governing the activities of participants in the relevant control regimes, and also comparing export control procedures.

The problem of extending transparency to weapons of mass destruction also requires a well-considered approach. Of course, it would be wrong to place this very dangerous area of disarmament outside the framework of openness, limiting openness to conventional armaments, all the more so as the corresponding United Nations General Assembly resolution calls upon us to discuss transparency with respect to weapons of mass destruction. However, at a time when the Register approved by the United Nations has not even come into operation, hasty actions and simplified solutions in this respect would in our opinion be premature. The question of how to approach the problem of subjecting weapons of mass destruction to transparency measures doubtless deserves the most serious discussion right now, specifically within the framework of the Conference of Disarmament. Obviously, the mechanical inclusion of weapons of mass destruction in the Register of Conventional Arms is hardly possible because, while the transfer of conventional weapons in principle does not run counter to international legal norms, the transfer of weapons of mass destruction and the corresponding technologies is prohibited by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention on biological weapons and the recently agreed Convention on chemical weapons. For that reason we support the view contained in the French working paper circulated at the previous session (CD/TIA/WP.2 of 28 July 1992) that measures to increase transparency in the area of weapons of mass destruction should form a separate procedure rather than supplementing the registration of data on arms deliveries. In this respect transparency in respect of weapons of mass destruction could probably be considered within the context of the issue of including States' armed forces and armaments as a whole into the scope of transparency measures. It is also essential to point out - and not just

to point out, but also to bear in mind - that some transparency with respect to weapons of mass destruction is already provided for under existing bilateral and multilateral treaties such as START II, the Convention on chemical weapons, etc. In order to increase transparency in the field of nuclear disarmament it might already be possible to reach agreement on the exchange of data on the quantities of fissionable materials released as a result of the destruction of nuclear weapons following reductions, and on their storage facilities.

(Mr. Batsanov, Russian Federation)

In our view it is also important to remember that the scope for further extending openness in the field of weapons of mass destruction and high technology will to a great extent depend on the stability and universality of the non-proliferation regimes concerned, particularly in the nuclear area. In the meantime, we are seriously concerned by the fact that accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is sometimes hedged about with additional conditions, and presented as a sort of "concession" to the international community for which it should pay a price. The Russian Federation believes that such an approach should receive an appropriate reaction on the part of the United Nations in the spirit of the decisions adopted during the Security Council meeting with the participation of senior State leaders in January 1992.

Of still greater concern to us was the statement made by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 12 March 1993 concerning its intention to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. As one of the depositaries of this Treaty, which in turn is a key document designed to ensure international peace and security in the nuclear age, the Russian Federation cannot remain indifferent to any step by any party which undermines the international nuclear-weapon non-proliferation regime. We would like to be sure that Pyongyang will very seriously weigh the consequences of its actions and that the above-mentioned decision taken by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will be reconsidered. We are convinced that unconditional compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is in the interests of the North Korean side itself first of all, and in the interests of stability and security on the Korean peninsula.

Mr. DEMBINSKI (Poland): Mr. President, I should like to congratulate you warmly on the assumption of the Conference's presidency which, as it happens, will be an extended one, ensuring continuity between the first and second parts of the CD session this year. I am confident that given your skill, expertise and your country's well-known dedication to disarmament, the business of the Conference on Disarmament is in good hands. You will have my delegation's unfailing support and cooperation in the discharge of your duties. At the same time, I should like to put on record our appreciation of the efficient guidance which the outgoing President, Mr. Deyanov of Bulgaria, provided to the CD at the crucial moment of its work.

It is my intention to address briefly the issue of transparency in armaments, including the interrelated question of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. These issues - in our view - constitute a high-priority item of our agenda this year. Our tasks in this regard are set out in no uncertain terms in General Assembly resolution 46/36 L. We are expected to address as soon as possible and elaborate universal and non-discriminatory practical means to increase openness and transparency in military matters.

Let me state at the outset that my delegation fully shares the sense of disappointment transpiring from some of the previous interventions over the apparent inability of the Conference on Disarmament and its subsidiary bodies thus far to proceed to a structured and result-oriented consideration of the

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item. The Ad Hoc Committee cannot afford to lose any more time if the Conference is to heed the General Assembly's request.

Poland attaches major importance to openness and transparency in armaments and in the military sphere in general. This goes also for the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We strongly believe that a scrupulous pursuit of these objectives should prejudice neither the legitimate needs of self-defence nor the recognized principle of undiminished security of all States. The experience Poland and other CSCE participating States have of the practical application of principles and structures of cooperative security in Europe is to us an eloquent proof that openness in the military sphere is conducive to regional peace and security. It may be likewise conducive to enhanced security perceptions on a broader scale. I would say more - openness and transparency, including the United Nations Register, have confidence- and security-building potential that needs to be explored also in regions beyond this continent.

In our view, a conventional arms transfer register covering import and export data, the relevant information on military holdings, procurement through national production and the specific policies in that regard could well become the mainstay of a global confidence- and security-building measure. Obviously, the confidence-building impact of such a measure will be directly proportional to its scope, both substantive and geographical. Incomplete disclosure, or one limited to only some countries, would certainly fall far short of the expectations which the international community rightly associates with efforts to check excessive and destabilizing accumulations of arms, especially in conflict-prone areas of the world. It is for this reason that the Polish delegation gladly lends its support to the timely suggestions made by Ambassador Wagenmakers and Ambassador Ledogar that the CD members and non-member participants undertake - as the CSCE States have already undertaken - to submit register data to the United Nations Secretary-General by the set deadline of 30 April of this year.

My delegation also finds interesting the idea of mutual, informal exchange of such national submissions among delegations involved in the Conference on Disarmament. We, furthermore, believe that in so far as documents and ideas

relevant to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms are concerned, it might be worthwhile for accounts of the United Nations-sponsored regional seminars on the subject, which are or will be hosted by Argentina, Italy, Japan and Poland, to be informally circulated by the secretariat for the information of this body.

In his intervention on 4 March, the distinguished representative of Ireland, a non-member participating State, referred to an interesting proposal for a code of conduct on arms transfers which his country made at the United Nations General Assembly last year. This idea should not be left unexamined by the Ad Hoc Committee. Nor, for that matter, should a similar
and I believe relevant concept of a code of conduct in the field of security which Poland submitted to the Vienna CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation late

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last year. While developed for the specific European context, some of the ideas of the draft code may well commend themselves to a broader community of nations.

Indeed, who can quarrel with such concepts of the draft which assert, for instance, that "the participating States recognize that security is indivisible and the security of every participating State is inseparably linked to that of all others"; that "while strengthening common security and stability, the participating States will ensure that the security of each of them is not adversely affected. No State will seek to strengthen its own security at the expense of others"; that "the participating States will keep the levels of their armed forces to the minimum commensurate with legitimate common or individual security needs within Europe and beyond"; and that "the participating States will follow a responsible approach to international arms transfers and will cooperate in strengthening multilateral non-proliferation regimes. Above all, they will prevent, through appropriate legislation and enforcement procedures, illegal arms transfers"?

My extensive quote of some of the relevant language of the draft code of conduct in the field of security has not been meant to tax the patience of the distinguished representatives around this table. The intention behind it was only to demonstrate that ideas abound and that momentum is gaining in the international community's search for effective and credible measures in the field of peace and international security. In the considered view of my delegation, the Conference on Disarmament should not miss this "window of opportunity" for its productive efforts in that respect. We must act without further delay.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Dembinski of Poland for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Norberg.

Mr. NORBERG (Sweden): My intervention today will be wholly devoted to the question of a nuclear test ban. As is well known Sweden has since long worked for a ban on all nuclear tests. Therefore, it is with great satisfaction that my delegation has noted the early establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban during this session of the Conference. It should be recalled that the General Assembly of the United Nations last fall approved the resolution on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty with a larger majority than ever. In the resolution all States are urged to seek to achieve the early discontinuance of all nuclear-test explosions for all time.

At present four of the five nuclear-weapon States are in practice observing a moratorium on nuclear testing. This moratorium creates a favourable climate for progress towards a comprehensive test ban. A prolongation of the moratoria as well as adherence to the moratorium by all nuclear-weapon States should vigorously contribute to maintain the momentum.

The world has been changing fast during the last few years. The same considerations are no longer valid and previous positions are being modified. My delegation has listened with great interest to the views expressed so far,

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not least by the five nuclear-weapon States, at the meetings this year of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. Even if positions have not yet been worked out in detail, it is our impression that, in the new international context, there is now a real chance to make progress towards a nuclear test ban.

At this juncture, it is extremely important that all delegations make an extra effort to reconsider old positions and try new ways to achieve a nuclear test ban. One of the main reasons for ascertaining a nuclear test ban, namely to halt the nuclear arms race among the present nuclear Powers, has possibly become less significant as the world is now in fact experiencing nuclear disarmament. Yet a halt to nuclear tests remains equally essential for other reasons, first and foremost as a means to halting the risk of nuclear proliferation. A total test ban would also eliminate possible environmental and health hazards connected with nuclear explosions.

Sweden in 1991 presented a draft comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, contained in document CD/1089 of 31 July 1991. This proposal is still on the table. My delegation has concluded, however, that due to developments since the proposal was submitted, some modifications are necessary. As to the scope of a treaty, Sweden has concluded that a ban should be total and comprehensive, thus including also an outright prohibition of all peaceful nuclear explosions (PNEs). There are, in the view of the Swedish delegation, several good reasons for such an approach. First, all PNEs imply a problem since experience gained from them might be used in the development of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it seems to my delegation that there are increasing doubts as to the possibility of using PNEs for any practical purpose, particularly taking into account the risks for the environment. My delegation would be interested to listen to views from other

delegations on this matter and other aspects of our original proposal. Considerations of this nature should, therefore, cause us to strongly stress, in the preambular part of a treaty, the non-proliferation effects of a nuclear test ban and to include in the treaty a PNE prohibition.

Developments of the last few years would also seem to call for a review on the section of a test-ban treaty dealing with verification issues. It is clear to my delegation that a worldwide seismic network should constitute the core of a comprehensive system for verification of treaty compliance. It is important to further study also other methods than a seismic network. In the Swedish draft other methods of verification are also included, such as the surveillance of radionuclides in the atmosphere, the use of satellite data and on-site inspections. In the view of my delegation the Group of Scientific Experts could take on this task. However, also other ways of dealing with this task should be considered without delay.

A discussion is also called for concerning the institutional arrangements for verifying compliance with the treaty. The verification system of the chemical weapons Convention is a historic achievement and could, no doubt, give inspiration and new ideas for the verification of a CTB. Nevertheless, it is important to ask if, in the nuclear field, the best and most cost-effective solution really is to create a new specialized organization for

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verification. Perhaps we should first explore the possibilities to utilize the competence and experience gained by the International Atomic Energy Agency also for this purpose.

As pointed out by Sweden's Foreign Minister in her statement to the Conference last month, Sweden strongly believes that the present positive international atmosphere resulting from the end of the cold war and the conclusion of the START agreements and the chemical weapons Convention should be fully utilized in the negotiations aimed at completing a comprehensive test ban. In this context, we consider it of utmost importance that the current moratoria observed by nuclear Powers be extended in order to ensure a positive atmosphere.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Mr. President, I should like to begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference and to pledge to you the full support of the United Kingdom delegation. Once again, it gives me particular pleasure to see a representative of a fellow member of the Commonwealth presiding over our deliberations. Your wisdom and wide experience leave me with no doubt that you will take the task in your stride. I would also like to express my delegation's thanks to your predecessor whose period in office coincided with a particularly active period in the Conference's work.

I have asked for the floor to express the concern of the United Kingdom, as one of the three Depositary Governments of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of

Nuclear Weapons, at the decision of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, of which notification was given to the United Nations Security Council on 12 March, to announce its intention to withdraw from the Treaty. Following its refusal to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency's special inspections, this decision gives further cause to question the intentions of the North Korean Government.

As British Ministers have restated recently, the United Kingdom attaches the highest priority to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We participate actively in international efforts to that end. The most important instrument of the non-proliferation regime is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. As a co-depositary of the Treaty, we are working to secure its indefinite extension in 1995. We believe that universal accession to the Treaty, and full compliance with its obligations, are the best ways to guarantee nuclear non-proliferation. We view the North Korean decision with great concern and are consulting with others, both in New York and in Vienna. We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reverse its decision and to fulfil all its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Safeguards Agreement. Meanwhile, it should be noted that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's obligations remain in force for three months after its official notification of withdrawal. These obligations include granting access to the two sites requested by the International Atomic Energy Agency in their resolution of 25 February.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to Ambassador Ledogar of the United States of America.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): Mr. President, I join the other speakers this morning who have expressed congratulations on your ascendancy, confidence in your leadership capacities and a promise of their delegations' cooperation.

As a depositary State for the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, I also would like to place on the record of this forum the great concern and disappointment of my Government at the announced intention of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to withdraw from the non-proliferation Treaty. The reasons given by the North Koreans for withdrawal do not appear to meet the "supreme national interest" criteria of the NPT, and their actions can only contribute to increased tensions and insecurity in the region. Their actions also undermine the value of the NPT for all the other parties. The United States Government, like the United Kingdom Government, notes the legal obligation of the North Korean Government to abide by all its commitments and obligations under the NPT and the IAEA safeguards regime for three months following its notification of intention to withdraw. We fully expect DPRK compliance with these obligations. The United

States also joins the many calls issued in recent days, including here today, for the DPRK to reconsider its actions, to ruminate upon the consequences, to retract its announcement, and to fulfil responsibly its obligations to its fellow parties under the terms of the Treaty.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Ledogar of the United States for his statement and also for his kind words of support to me. The next speaker on my list is Ambassador Errera of France.

Mr. ERRERA (France) (translated from French): Let me convey to you, Sir, as you take up the office of President of our Conference, how happy my delegation is to see you conducting our work. First of all because you are a friend with whom we have constant dialogue and implicit trust, a colleague whose breadth of vision, competence and keen judgement are acknowledged by all. Next because Canada is bound to France by so many historical, political, cultural, linguistic ties, finally because, as everyone knows, Canada for many years now has been making a major contribution to the cause of disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. You are occupying the Chair of our Conference at a critical point for our future. You may be assured not only of our wholehearted wishes for success but also, naturally, of our full support. I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the representative of Bulgaria, who preceded you with skill and authority in this task.

As soon as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced its withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the French Government strongly condemned this grave and unprecedented decision, a decision that undermines the non-proliferation regime as a whole. The resulting situation prompts us to call to mind the following facts. In

(Mr. Errera, France)

pursuance of article X of the NPT, a party may withdraw from the Treaty only if extraordinary events related to the subject-matter of the Treaty have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country. Such a withdrawal is subject to its being notified by the State concerned to all the other parties and the Security Council, with three months' notice. During that three-month period the State remains a party to the Treaty. Until that period has come to an end, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is therefore bound to fulfil its obligations, and hence to apply its safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). These safeguards, let us remember, apply to all source or special fissionable material in all peaceful nuclear activities within the territory of the State. On 25 February last, the decision of the Director General of IAEA to ask the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to accept an inspection of two facilities in that country, in pursuance of the safeguards agreement that it has concluded, that decision was based on a detailed report providing conclusive evidence, that decision was backed up by a resolution of the Board of Governors, representing the international community, that decision was adopted by consensus. This resolution also gave the North Korean Government one month to comply with its obligations. This very day, the Board of Governors of

IAEA, which is holding a special meeting, will be informed of the most recent developments by the Director General of the Agency. This further meeting offers North Korea another change to comply with the Agency's request.

For these reasons, France joins the many countries that have urged the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reverse its decision to withdraw from the NPT and to allow the full application of the safeguards agreement and to respond within the deadline to the requests for additional information and access to the two sites that were mentioned in the Board of Governors resolution of 25 February. This matter is now the subject of consultations in the United Nations Security Council. I would like to recall that on 31 January 1992, the Security Council, meeting at the level of heads of State and Government underlined "the need for all Member States to fulfil their obligations in relation to arms control and disarmament and prevent the proliferation in all forms of weapons of mass destruction". The Council also stated that "the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security".

Several States this very morning have thought it appropriate to bring this question up before the Conference on Disarmament, which is the international community's sole negotiating forum on disarmament, and this is because the entire international community feels concerned. As was recalled in the report on our Conference adopted by consensus on the subject of the "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", the important report which the United Nations Secretary-General had submitted to us in New York, this report said that disarmament "as a key element in pursuit of overall international security ... includes more and more clearly the need, recognized by all, to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, as well as their delivery system". France supports this idea, which inspired its own disarmament plan of 1991.

(Mr. Errera, France)

Let there be no misunderstanding. The efforts being carried out by the international community at the present time for nuclear disarmament could be jeopardized if attacks were made on the non-proliferation regime.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank Ambassador Errera of France for his statement and for his kind words of support for me and for my country. I understand that the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mr. Tchoé Il, has asked for the floor.

Mr. TCHOE (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (translated from French): First of all, Mr. President, allow me to extend to you our congratulations at seeing you presiding over our work at a crucial time. I have asked for the floor to take up briefly the issue that has just been mentioned by you and by some of the delegations present here.

First and foremost, I would like to tell you about the relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the NPT. As you well know, six inspections took place in respect of ourselves last year. During this period, we showed the inspectors everything, all our sincerity and all the facilities pertaining to the nuclear issue. We even showed them facilities the list of which did not appear in the report supplied by us to the International Atomic Energy Agency. But certain individuals from the Agency suggested seeing military sites which have nothing to do with the nuclear issue using information provided by a third country imposing upon us unfair ad hoc inspections. It is well known that this is not in conformity with the NPT statutes. We are convinced that the NPT should maintain the autonomy and impartiality inherent in it. All countries have the right to self-determination and to have defence forces. As you know well, my country is now in a very serious situation as a result of the large-scale "Team Spirit" military exercises mobilizing vast quantities of conventional and nuclear arms against our Republic. At a time when the cold war is over, as they say, there is no excuse for this type of manoeuvre against the peace and disarmament policy of a small independent country. Given the exceptionally serious situation which threatens to jeopardize the supreme interests of the country, my Government cannot fail to take the necessary measures. In view of the issue relating to the withdrawal of my country from the NPT in this Conference, we would like to ask the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament to circulate to all delegations of the Conference the statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs issued on the 12th of this month, as an official document of the Conference, so that all delegations can understand our position, our reason for withdrawal from the NPT. It is up to you to decide where the cause of the fundamental danger on the Korean peninsula lies.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement and for his remarks to the Chair. I have been asked for the floor by the representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador Wagenmakers.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): I am taking the floor once more on behalf of the Western Group of the Conference on Disarmament to put on record our great concern about the action of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in announcing on 12 March that it would withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This is a serious step which puts stability and security in East Asia at risk, especially the Korean peninsula, and which runs counter to efforts for a comprehensive and universal application of the NPT.

We believe strongly that the NPT serves the interest of the international community. It is the most widely supported arms control treaty in existence and

has been remarkably successful in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We consider that the decision of the DPRK to withdraw from the NPT is a challenge to the non-proliferation efforts under the NPT, will have grave repercussions and would raise serious questions in many quarters about its nuclear ambitions. On behalf of the Western Group of States I call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea not to retreat into isolation.

More broadly than the serious and worrying effects of this decision by the DPRK on stability in its immediate neighbourhood, multilateral non-proliferation assurances, which are given binding force in the NPT, lie at the core of international security. Adherence to the multilateral non-proliferation commitments is an important test of responsible international citizenship which nations consider carefully and seriously. To repudiate such commitments is a very grave step, justified only by reference to extraordinary events. This is the principle spelt out in article 10 of the NPT. The right to withdraw is not unlimited and the evaluation of the existence of extraordinary events must be made in good faith and cannot be left solely to the arbitrary judgements of the withdrawing State. Furthermore, whatever decision is taken on the right to withdraw in the present case, it must be pointed out that within a period of three months after the notification of the withdrawal, the withdrawing State must fully abide by the obligations stemming from the NPT. In consequence, the DPRK should comply with the resolution of the Board of Governors of IAEA of 25 February 1993.

The Western Group of States in the CD strongly urges the Government of the DBRK to reverse forthwith its notice to withdraw from the NPT.

Mr. NEAGU (Romania): I asked for the floor in order to join other speakers who expressed concern with respect to the announcement made last week by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it intends to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, but before doing so, allow me, Sir, to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in carrying out your responsibilities. I wish you every success in this regard. I would also like to express our gratitude to your predecessors, Ambassador Amorim of Brazil and Minister Plenipotentiary Deyanov of Bulgaria, for their valuable contribution and for the excellent manner in which they have guided the work of the Conference.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

Romania deplores this action by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea which comes at a time important efforts are made to strengthen non-proliferation and new States adhere to the NPT. As my delegation stated many times in the recent past, Romania attaches particular importance to, and fully supports, the non-proliferation Treaty, which is indeed a solid basis for curbing nuclear proliferation and a fundamental pillar of the non-proliferation regime. Therefore, universal adherence to this Treaty, the assurance of the efficiency of

its legal regime and, consequently, the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT at the 1995 review conference are essential.

My Government emphasizes once again the vital role in the implementation of the Treaty of strict compliance with and carrying out of the safeguards agreements concluded by States parties with IAEA. The Agency's inspections - be they of a routine or of a special nature - are absolutely indispensable as a means of verifying compliance with the obligations under the Treaty. This is a principled standpoint which was clearly expressed at the 1990 NPT review conference, in the framework of the IAEA General Conference and Board of Governors and, last January, in this Conference. The Romanian basic standpoint does not refer to any particular country. It aims at strengthening the non-proliferation and safeguards regimes as a cornerstone of the international security system. For all these reasons we call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reconsider its 12 March statement and to fulfil its responsibilities under the NPT and the IAEA safeguards agreement.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Neagu for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me and to my predecessors. I now give the floor to Ambassador Park of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. PARK (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, as this is the first occasion that I am taking the floor at the current session, let me add my own words of congratulation to those words you have received since your assumption of the presidency. I am particularly pleased to see you, Sir, in whose great country I had the honour of serving as the Korean Ambassador in the past, chairing the Conference on Disarmament, as your reputation for leadership, integrity and competence is widely known. I am sure that the Conference on Disarmament will benefit from your able guidance. I also take this occasion to express our thanks to the outgoing President, the distinguished representative of Bulgaria, for his eminent leadership during his presidency, and to Ambassador Berasategui, Secretary-General of the CD, for his untiring efforts and many contributions on behalf of the CD.

Like many others in this chamber, the North Korean announcement of 12 March to withdraw from the NPT disappointed and surprised us. Today, having listened attentively to the statements of the distinguished Ambassadors of the Netherlands, Canada, the United States, Romania, France and the United Kingdom, I can only say that Korea fully shares their concerns and the rising concerns of the international community on this matter. I, as a representative of the country that has been exposed to great danger as a

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result of North Korea's decision, am grateful to the members of the Conference for the urgent attention that they are giving this matter.

The North Korean nuclear issue has now emerged from the regional to the global level. By abandoning the NPT, North Korea has challenged the worldwide

nuclear non-proliferation system and has gone against the earnest wishes of the global community for a nuclear-free world. The North Korean rejection of the NPT only serves to deepen suspicions about their nuclear weapons project.

As you may recall, IAEA, at its Governing Council in February, set a 25 March deadline for the inspection of two sites that IAEA analysts suspect may be processing nuclear fuels. Instead of complying with the resolution adopted by the Board of Governors of IAEA, North Korea has decided to withdraw from the NPT, declaring a semi-state of war, and placing its military on a war footing. Today IAEA is meeting in emergency session to deal with the dangerous situation created by North Korea's irresponsible decision.

With respect to the excuses which North Korea has offered to justify its deed, I would like to set the record straight before the Conference. The excuse that North Korea has presented to justify its withdrawal from the NPT is that the Korea-United States "Team Spirit" exercises pose a nuclear threat to North Korea, and further that some officials of the IAEA secretariat are biased in their dealings with the North.

The annual "Team Spirit" exercises, conducted since 1976 - and I emphasize, since 1976 - are of a purely defensive nature. They employ a minimum level of conventional weapons and furthermore, the Republic of Korea has extended a standing invitation to all nations, including the DPRK, to observe this exercise. North Korea has opted to reject this offer, and has distorted the nature of the exercise for propaganda purposes. Incidentally, I would like to inform the Conference that the field training of the "Team Spirit '93" which has been under way for 10 days came to a close today.

In addition, North Korea's allegations with respect to the IAEA secretariat do not correctly reflect the efforts of IAEA inspectors to verify North Korea's initial report and to increase the transparency of North Korea's nuclear programme. Under the NPT, North Korea is under a legal obligation to allow IAEA inspectors into its nuclear waste sites. By examining the North Korean reactors and waste, they wanted to clear up the discrepancy that exists between what Pyongyang reported to IAEA about the operation of its reactors, and what the IAEA experts discovered in recent inspections. We believe that the secretariat's request for its inspection of two suspected sites is perfectly justified.

DPRK's move has already had a detrimental effect on inter-Korean relations. The achievements that have been made through difficult dialogues in recent years are in jeopardy. Tensions are running high. You may recall that last March, my Northern counterpart Ambassador Ri Tcheul and I jointly signed a letter asking the Secretary-General of the CD to distribute the texts of the South-North accords as official CD documents. One crucial provision in

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the accord binds both South and North Korea to refrain from going nuclear. Of course, the raison d'etre of the accord was the denuclearization of the Korean

peninsula. The Republic of Korea has repeatedly made it clear that opening up the entire Korean peninsula to nuclear inspections would reassure all Koreans, as well as the international community, that the nuclear threat on the Korean peninsula has been vanquished. This would open the way to wider political and economic ties between the DPRK and the rest of the world.

It is hard to accept that North Korea has chosen to threaten the global non-proliferation system, and that the situation on the Korean peninsula should return to that of cold war days. The key to solving this problem is in the hands of North Korea. Therefore, I urge North Korea to reverse its decision to withdraw from the NPT, and to fulfil its responsibilities in earnest as a party to the NPT by complying faithfully with the IAEA resolution requesting it to subject its suspected nuclear sites to IAEA inspections. I believe that we should seek to obtain North Korea's reversal through dialogue and persuasion. I am confident that the international community is with us in our efforts in this regard.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank Ambassador Park Soo Gil for his statement and for his kind references to me in the Chair. I give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria, Mr. Halatchev.

Mr. HALATCHEV (Bulgaria): Mr. President, on behalf of the Bulgarian delegation I would like to express to you and to other colleagues our gratitude for the kind words addressed to the outgoing President. My delegation wishes you every success in discharging your responsibilities as President of the Conference on Disarmament - we pledge to you our full support.

Let me make a brief statement in connection with the decision of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to withdraw from the non-proliferation Treaty on nuclear weapons. We share the great concern expressed by other delegations at the decision taken by the Government of the Democratic People,s Republic of Korea to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Government of the Republic of Bulgaria considers the NPT as a cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime with respect to nuclear weapons. The wide membership of the NPT is an indication of the great importance that the international community attaches to this instrument. Concerted action to strengthen the non-proliferation regime is currently one of the major avenues of the efforts to eliminate the potential danger to peace and stability posed by a spread of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction. The strict and unconditional implementation of all provisions of the NPT and of the respective IAEA safeguards agreements concluded under article III of that Treaty is a basic prerequisite for ensuring the viability and the stabilizing role of the non-proliferation regime. Any development that contravenes this collective effort would inevitably produce an extremely negative effect. In this context, the decision of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to withdraw from the NPT is an unprecedented act representing a serious challenge to the non-proliferation regime and to the international community. This step

may have serious implications to not only the security of the region, but also to international peace and security at large. As one of the members of the IAEA Board of Governors, the Republic of Bulgaria reaffirms its full confidence in, and support for, the work of the Agency including its inspection procedure, as well as for the Board of Governors resolution of 25 February 1993 calling on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fulfil its responsibilities under the NPT and its IAEA safeguards agreement. Bulgaria will continue to help ensure the conditions necessary for the practical implementation of that resolution. We hope that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will reconsider its decision and continue to be bound by its legal obligations under the NPT.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. Are there any further representatives who wish to take the floor at this stage? I see none.

I would now like to turn to some items of business of the Conference. First, I should like to report to the Conference that the consultations held on the appointment of the new Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments have concluded successfully. Accordingly, the Group of 21 has nominated the representative of Egypt, Ambassador Zahran, as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. I informed the coordinators at our meeting yesterday of my intention to formalize this appointment today. Therefore, I now invite the Conference to appoint Ambassador Zahran of Egypt as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I now extend our congratulations to Ambassador Zahran on this important appointment and wish him all success in the tasks facing him in this capacity? I have been asked by Ambassador Zahran to inform the Conference that he intends to hold a brief organizational meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee tomorrow, Friday at 3 p.m.

May I now turn to our second subject? The secretariat has distributed today the weekly timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies during the coming week. A revision has been circulated during the meeting to take account of a suggestion of Ambassador Zahran to re-schedule his meeting of the transparency in armaments Ad Hoc Committee. As usual, the timetable is merely indicative and subject to change, if necessary. On this understanding, may we adopt it?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I should like now to raise another organizational matter. You will recall that, at the opening of the annual session, we agreed that there would be no meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary bodies during the first week of the second part of the session, that is between 10 and 14 May, since the Preparatory Committee for the review conference of the Treaty on the Non-

Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons would meet during this period in New York City. Furthermore, the date allocated for the plenary

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meeting to be held the following week, Thursday, 20 May, is an official holiday in Geneva and accordingly in the Palais des Nations. This being the case, during consultations with the coordinators we agreed to re-schedule the plenary meeting for that week for Tuesday, 18 May. Thus, the first plenary meeting of the second part of the annual session will be held on that date.

That concludes our work for today and I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 23 March, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.